Peruvian Farmers On Strike

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On Aug. 20, Juan Rojas Vargas, secretary general of the Peruvian Peasant Confederation (CCP), said some 500,000 farmers went on strike to protest the government's failure to fulfill promises made last spring to end strikes in March and February. The farmers are also demanding that the government declare a "farming national emergency." Rojas said strikers will use roadblocks and other measures "to block the flow of products to the capital and other cities in the interior." Agriculture Minister Juan Coronado said an emergency program would mean the government's absorbing debts to farmers affected by floods in Piura in northern Peru, and drought in the southeastern Andean cities of Cusco and Puno. Next, he said, the cost of fertilizer would have to be cut by 50% and the farmers' credit bank would have to give farmers preferential treatment in granting loans and offer lower interest rates. The CCP has requested zero-percent interest rates on loans and technical assistance for the poorest farmers in the Trapecio zone in the Andean mountains. (Basic data from AFP, 08/20/89)

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